

VZCZCXR06608

PP RUEHBZ RUEHMR RUEHPA RUEHRN

DE RUEHTRO #0567/01 1950906

ZNY CCCCC ZZH

P 140906Z JUL 09

FM AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5031

INFO RUEHZO/AFRICAN UNION COLLECTIVE

RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 1086

RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY 0762

RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC

RHMFISS/CJTF HOA

RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC

RHMFISS/CDR USAFRICOM STUTTGART GE

RHMFISS/Joint Staff WASHINGTON DC

RHEHAAA/NSC WASHINGTON DC

RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC

RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS PRIORITY 0185

RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 0200

RUEHSB/AMEMBASSY HARARE PRIORITY 0002

RUEHTRO/AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI 5569

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 TRIPOLI 000567

SIPDIS

STATE FOR AF/FO, AF/E, AF/W AND AF/RSA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 7/13/2019

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [ZI](#) [AU](#) [LY](#)

SUBJECT: AU SUMMIT: MUGABE REMAINS DEFIANT

TRIPOLI 00000567 001.2 OF 002

CLASSIFIED BY: Gene A. Cretz, Ambassador, US Embassy Tripoli, Department of State.

REASON: 1.4 (b), (d)

¶1. (C) Summary: In a July 2 meeting with AF A/S Carson, President Robert Mugabe emotionally defended his stewardship of Zimbabwe over the last 26 years, heatedly denouncing "outside interference," claiming he would implement the Global Political Agreement (GPA) "in my own way," and insisting Zimbabwe is "my country." Mugabe's responses to Carson's questions became increasingly agitated and he abruptly ended the meeting by jumping up and storming out. Mugabe's obvious discomfort with what amounted to 10 minutes of low key questions about the GPA, human rights, and his legacy was preceded by his 35 minute monologue on British perfidy and American untrustworthiness. The prospects for Zimbabwe's democracy appear bleak if Mugabe's extreme sensitivity to questions is any indication of his commitment to the GPA. End Summary.

¶2. (C) A/S Carson and President Mugabe met July 2 on the margins of the AU Summit in Sirte, Libya. Mugabe was accompanied by Foreign Minister S.S. Mumbengegwi and Zimbabwe's Ambassador to Libya George Vengesa. A/S Carson was accompanied by desk officer Maria Beyzerov.

MUGABE ANNOYED WITH TSVANGIRAI VISIT TO U.S.

¶3. (C) Mugabe said he was "astonished" that Walter Mzembi (Minister of Tourism and the recent Tsvangirai delegation's only ZANU-PF member) was not invited to Tsvangirai's June 12 meeting with President Obama. Mugabe said this led him to question USG support for the unity government. He asserted that U.S. assistance to Zimbabwe would "end up in the hands of the British," and noted we were free to spend our money this way if we chose. Mugabe also claimed MDC-Tsvangirai was not genuinely popular and claimed they made gains in the most recent election by bribing voters with food.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GPA

¶4. (C) Carson congratulated Mugabe on the conclusion of the GPA and asked Mugabe for his assessment of progress to date. Mugabe

said things were going well but ZANU-PF and the MDC had different backgrounds "but we are free to determine our future."

When asked about his commitment to fully implement the GPA, Mugabe angrily snapped back, "We'll do it our own way and not in accordance with the likes and dislikes of the United States." Mugabe called the question itself "rude" and noted he had signed the agreement, which meant he will implement it. He concluded, "it's the outside subjectivity that we don't want" and insisted that "outside interference" is not welcome.

THE ECONOMY AND MUGABE'S LEGACY

¶ 15. (C) Mugabe continued in this vein when asked to consider his legacy, especially with regard to Zimbabwe's economy. He replied in an angry tone, "the legacy I want to leave behind is Zimbabwe without outside interference."

¶ 16. (C) Carson said the international community did not expect Zimbabwe to fall into economic despair. Mugabe said Zimbabwe is not in despair and is doing better than some countries which do not face sanctions. Mugabe repeatedly blamed the economic problems that exist in Zimbabwe on sanctions. Carson clarified that the reason behind Zimbabwe's economic problems was Mugabe's mismanagement style and not sanctions.

USG READY TO WELCOME ZIMBABWE INTO COMMUNITY OF DEMOCRATIC NATIONS

¶ 17. (C) Carson emphasized that the United States is ready to welcome Zimbabwe back into the circle of democratic nations but cannot do so as long as the current situation continues. "Keep your money, keep your power, and keep away from us. You can pass that message to Obama," Mugabe replied. He angrily insisted that Zimbabwe was his country and warned all outsiders to stay out.

TRIPOLI 00000567 002.2 OF 002

HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES

¶ 18. (C) In response to Carson's question about human rights violations in Zimbabwe, Mugabe said, "what violations?" Speaking loudly, Mugabe blamed the British for organizing riots in Zimbabwe and said, "did you expect me to just sit back and watch?" Mugabe claimed that the security forces used appropriate measures to keep order.

¶ 19. (C) Carson then suggested that Mugabe allow the international press into Zimbabwe so the world can see what is really happening on the ground. If in fact there are no ongoing human rights violations and the economic crisis is not as bad as we think, the press will document the facts and inform the rest of the world. Mugabe said he will not allow international press in since all they are interested in is "false reporting." He shouted that as an outsider it's not Carson's place to tell him what to do in "his country" and stormed out of the meeting.

MUGABE'S HISTORY LESSON

¶ 110. (C) Mugabe's outbursts were preceded by a 35-minute monologue of revisionist history about Zimbabwe's past, from the arrival of British colonials, through the liberation war, and up until the present. Sinking into his chair, Mugabe talked about British Prime Minister Tony Blair's response to Zimbabwe's "fast track" land reform. Mugabe implied that former President Bush supported the British in their post independence "war against Zimbabwe" as a quid pro quo for Blair's support of the U.S. in the Iraq war. He described Blair as Zimbabwe's number one enemy and Bush as "enemy number two."

COMMENT

¶11. (C) Mugabe is an angry and defiant man caught up in a time warp. Nearly thirty years after Zimbabwe's independence, he still blames Britain for all of his country's past and current problems. He adamantly refuses to accept any blame for Zimbabwe's sharp economic decline and fall from political grace.

He also continues to view Morgan Tsvangirai's MDC as a creation and puppet of the British government. Mugabe's obsession with the British, his low regard for the MDC and his emotional reaction to outside criticism do not bode well for the future. Our assessment is the MDC's ability to fully implement the GPA -- and the health and credibility of Zimbabwe's democracy -- is probably limited as long as Mugabe remains in power.

¶12. (U) A/S Carson has approved this message.
CRETZ